

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A computer-implemented method for providing feedback regarding a program's data access patterns, comprising:
  - identifying repetitively occurring data access sequences in a stream of data access references;
  - displaying a plurality of identifiers, wherein each identifier is associated with one of the data access sequences; and
  - upon selection of one of the plurality of identifiers, identifying code related to the data access sequence associated with the selected identifier.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein identifying the sequences includes steps, comprising:
  - constructing a grammar from the stream of data access references;
  - building a candidate sequence using the grammar; and
  - if a cost of accessing data in the candidate sequence exceeds a threshold, marking the candidate sequence as a repetitively occurring data access sequence.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein computing the cost comprises multiplying a number of times the candidate sequence occurs in the grammar by a number of data access references in the candidate sequence.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the list of identifiers is displayed in a software development tool.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the software development tool is a visual development environment.
6. The method of claim 4, wherein the selection is received from a user input device.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a navigation pane that displays the list of identifiers and navigates the list in response to user input.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the code is displayed and highlighted.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the code comprises source code.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the code comprises assembly code.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the code, when previously executed, referenced data in the data access sequence associated with the selected identifier.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the stream of data access references is included in a trace file.

13. A system for developing computer-executable software, comprising:  
an instrumentation tool configured to instrument a software program to produce a trace when the software program is executed;  
a trace analyzer configured to receive the trace and identify repetitively occurring data access sequences; and  
a software development tool configured to use the identified data access sequences in software development.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein the instrumentation tool, the trace analyzer, and the software development tool are integrated in a visual development environment.

15. The system of claim 13, wherein the trace analyzer identifies repetitively occurring data access sequences by performing steps, comprising:  
constructing a directed acyclic graph (DAG) from the data accesses of the trace file;

building a candidate sequence using the DAG; and  
if a cost of accessing data in the candidate sequence exceeds a threshold,  
marking the candidate sequence as a repetitively occurring data access sequence.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein computing the cost comprises  
multiplying a number of times the candidate sequence is generated using the DAG by a  
number of data access references in the candidate sequence.

17. The system of claim 13, wherein the software development tool includes  
a navigation pane configured to display a list of identifiers, wherein each identifier is  
associated with one of the repetitively occurring data access sequences.

18. The system of claim 17, wherein the navigation pane is further  
configured to navigate the list of identifiers in response to user input.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein upon selection of one of the identifiers,  
the software development tool is further configured to display code related to the  
repetitively occurring data access sequence associated with the selected identifier.

20. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions  
for providing information about a stream of data accesses, comprising:  
displaying a plurality of identifiers, wherein each identifier is associated  
with a repetitively occurring data access sequence; and  
upon selection of one of the identifiers, displaying an attribute of the  
associated data access sequence.

21. The computer-readable medium of claim 20, wherein the attribute  
comprises the number of times the associated data access sequence repeats in the  
stream.

22. The computer-readable medium of claim 20, wherein the attribute comprises the number of data references in the associated data access sequence.

23. The computer-readable medium of claim 20, wherein the attribute comprises a number of unique objects referenced in the associated data access sequence.

24. The computer-readable medium of claim 20, wherein the attribute comprises a number of references in the stream between occurrences of the data access sequence.

25. The computer-readable medium of claim 20, wherein the attribute shows the efficiency with which the references of a data access sequence are placed in cache blocks.

26. The computer-readable medium of claim 25, wherein the efficiency is calculated by dividing a minimum number of cache blocks in which references of the data access sequence could be placed by an actual number of cache blocks in which references in the data access sequence are placed.